

THE VICTORIAN ALLIANCE OF SAN FRANCISCO

# 2016 Choice House Tour Park



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## *About the Victorian Alliance*

The Victorian Alliance of San Francisco was organized in 1973 to promote preservation and restoration of historic buildings. Our members and guest speakers share information on preservation, history, architecture, and decorative arts at our monthly meetings as well as in our monthly bulletin. We also share helpful information on materials, techniques, contractors, and artisans with those wishing to restore their Victorian buildings. We lobby and testify on preservation issues at city and neighborhood meetings and reinforce our efforts with donations for neighborhood projects dealing with restoration and preservation. Most of our financial resources come from funds raised by Alliance activities such as house tours, garden tours, and garage sales. We are a volunteer organization with no paid staff, so almost all the funds we raise are available to support preservation and restoration projects. We also hold social functions such as our annual Holiday Party, which has become a celebrated tradition. We invite your participation at whatever level your interests and time permit. We meet the last Wednesday of each month, except for November and December. Please call (415) 824-2666 for the location of our next meeting or visit our website at [victorianalliance.org](http://victorianalliance.org) for more information.

Jim Warshell, *President*

Bathsheba Malsheen, *Vice President*

David Laudon, *Treasurer*

Mary Zablotny, *Recording Secretary*

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Anita Jean Denz, *Membership Secretary*

The Victorian Alliance of San Francisco

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[victorianalliance.org](http://victorianalliance.org)

# *Welcome from The Victorian Alliance of San Francisco*

Dear Tour Guests,

It is my pleasure to welcome you to our 44th Annual House Tour. We are delighted to have you with us to celebrate eight treasured homes and an historic church in Duboce Triangle. This is a special pleasure in that this community has recently achieved Historic District status to acknowledge its significance and add protection to the historic elements. To achieve this designation is a complex process, and we applaud the community for its diligence and determination in making it happen.

While we invite you to enjoy this friendly and beautiful community, the heart of the tour is visiting the interiors of the homes generously offered by their owners for viewing. We enjoy showing the creativity and care that have gone into these residences. They demonstrate that homes of all sizes can be successfully updated to current needs without compromising the defining historic elements of the interiors. Our strong belief is that sensitive and thoughtful adaptation incorporating the historic interior elements produces a vastly superior outcome than gutting out the interior. Once the historic elements are gone, it is unlikely they can ever be replaced. The character and timelessness they bring to all these homes provide a richness that a sterile white box cannot match. The tasteful mix of antiques with contemporary pieces and the variety of traditional and contemporary color schemes show how exciting results have been achieved without compromising the integrity of these wonderful historic resources.

We thank all the volunteers whose efforts make today's tour possible. We especially are grateful to the homeowners for their gracious hospitality. Your support in attending not only funds the tour but, since we are a frugal all-volunteer group, provides support to our Historic Preservation Grant Program. Since our founding in 1973, we have awarded approximately \$350,000 to restore notable artifacts that grace our public parks, churches, and historic buildings. So enjoy your day knowing that you too have been part of the ongoing effort to support preservation in our beautiful city.

Sincerely,  
Jim Warshell

President  
The Victorian Alliance of San Francisco



Member, Board of Supervisors  
District 8



City and County of San Francisco

## SCOTT WIENER

威 善 高



### GREETINGS FROM SUPERVISOR SCOTT WIENER

On behalf of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors, it is my honor to welcome you to the Victorian Alliance of San Francisco's 44<sup>th</sup> Annual House Tour.

Each year, the Victorian Alliance of San Francisco organizes a tour of historic neighborhoods where guests may tour the interiors of well-loved architectural treasures. These annual house tours not only educate the public on the critical importance of preserving these residences, but also help raise funds for crucial historic preservation projects through the Victorian Alliance Grants Program, awarding over \$350,000 since 1973.

This year, the Alliance will showcase residences within the exceptional Duboce Triangle neighborhood, which reflects the architectural diversity of the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century late Victorian and Edwardian styles. The unique residence within Duboce Triangle represent the hallmarks of San Francisco's beloved architectural heritage, and I'm proud to have authored legislation protecting this heritage by creating the Duboce Park Landmark District.

I am honored to work with the Victorian Alliance of San Francisco to preserve the unique architectural heritage of our City, and I welcome you to this year's Annual House Tour of Duboce Triangle.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Scott Wiener".

Scott Wiener  
Member, Board of Supervisors

## Duboce Park Neighborhood History

**T**HE 2016 VICTORIAN Alliance House Tour will take place in one of San Francisco's most idyllic locations, the Duboce Park neighborhood, a community nicely centered around a pleasantly landscaped green space. This year you will have the glorious opportunity to visit eight breathtakingly whimsical examples of the City's jewel-box Victorian architecture and a stunning post-quake church sanctuary. The intricate detail, loving care and restoration bestowed on the charming homes featured this year within the tour route is amazing.

Since the mid-1850s, the area now occupied by Duboce Park (Scott, Waller, Steiner Streets and Duboce Avenue, originally Ridley Street) had been set aside for a city hospital and was shown as a "public reservation," or public parkland, on some 1856 maps.

Hampered by a lack of reliable transportation, development was slow in coming. The area presently known as Duboce Park did not become readily accessible until Market Street was graded west of Dolores Street during the 1870s. The 1880s brought cable car lines running to the Upper Market areas, such as the Market and Haight (Red Line), which opened in 1883, and the Market and Castro Line in 1887. These transit lines made commuting to jobs downtown and in the South of Market area feasible, and residential construction began to proliferate in the Duboce Park area.

Although a few hardy pioneers did venture into the area, most of the development occurred in the decades after 1883 and after the arrival of public transit as developers purchased large tracts of land and subdivided them into house-sized lots. In the 1870s and 1880s, many Scandinavian immigrants (from Sweden, Denmark, and Norway), as well as Finnish immigrants, came to San Francisco, many settling in the area we now know as the Duboce Park neighborhood.

By 1896, the city hospital had not materialized and the City sold a part of the reservation to private owners who then sold parcels to housing developers. Residential development flourished and jewel-box Victorian houses appeared on all the blocks surrounding Duboce Park. The area was almost all developed in a few years around 1890 by a consortium of individual architects and contractors. The result is one of the most delightful Victorian enclaves in San Francisco.

Developers laid out two new block-long streets, extended Pierce Street south of Waller, and began building houses. In 1900, the neighborhood elected Colonel Victor D. Duboce, a veteran of the recent Spanish-American War, to the Board of Supervisors. Duboce advocated converting the odd-shaped chunk left over from the old hospital reservation into a public park, as had originally been intended.

Unfortunately, Duboce died before he could convince the Board of Supervisors, but, in a vote of sympathy for Duboce and his constituents, the Board passed a resolution and renamed Ridley Street Duboce Avenue in his honor. The Board also voted to convert the undeveloped portion of the old hospital reservation into a park to be named Duboce Park, and construction began in 1899. In 1906 it became an earthquake refugee tent camp for those made homeless by the disaster.

Nearly all of the buildings in the area are of wood frame construction and clad in wood siding or stucco. Late Victorian and Edwardian era architectural styles predominate, with the Queen Anne style most widely represented. Common traits found throughout the district are bay windows, decorative cornices, ornamental shingles, and spindle work, as well as more classically influenced detailing such as dentils, pediments, columns, and applied plaster ornament.

Most of the Queen Anne buildings tend to conform to a basic plan of a projecting bay on the first floor, flanked by an open porch and entry to the side, with the porch entry often surmounted by spindle work or decorative porch brackets. These buildings are constructed almost exclusively with prominent front-facing gables, often clad in decorative shingles or decorated with applied ornament.

The Shingle (or First Bay Region) buildings, which make up a minority of buildings in the area, are distinguished by features such as shingle cladding, steeply pitched gable or gambrel roofs, flared eaves, and wavy wall surfaces, such as bulges in the gables with the shingles curving into a recessed window.

The Classical Revival or "Edwardian" buildings are typically multi-story residential flats, distinguished by flat roofs, prominent cornices, and rounded bay windows. Entrances are typically flanked by Classical columns or pilasters; applied plaster ornament, such as garlands and floral friezes, is also common.

The five Hinkel brothers (Henry, Charles, John, William, and George) were active builders in the area, especially in the middle and late 1880s. Most of their houses have the rectangular bay windows of Stick Eastlake style, and the Hinkels seem to have constructed most of the square-bay houses in the four blocks between Scott and Divisadero from Duboce to Oak Street. Another developer responsible for buildings in the neighborhood was Fernando Nelson. Nelson was a prolific San Francisco builder active during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. He constructed more than 4,000 dwellings during a 50-year career, including the majority of the houses on Carmelita Street within the Duboce Park Historic District.

As is often the case in urban settings, the Duboce Park neighborhood has experienced substantial social, economic, and ethnic shifts, particularly after World War II and again in the decades between the 1960s and 1980s. These changes are illustrated by periods of decline followed by gentrification and a new renaissance that began in the 1980s.

This unique neighborhood was finally recognized as the prized historic neighborhood it is in 2013. Mayor Ed Lee signed legislation designating the Duboce Park Historic District effective July 12, 2013, making it the newest landmark district in San Francisco.

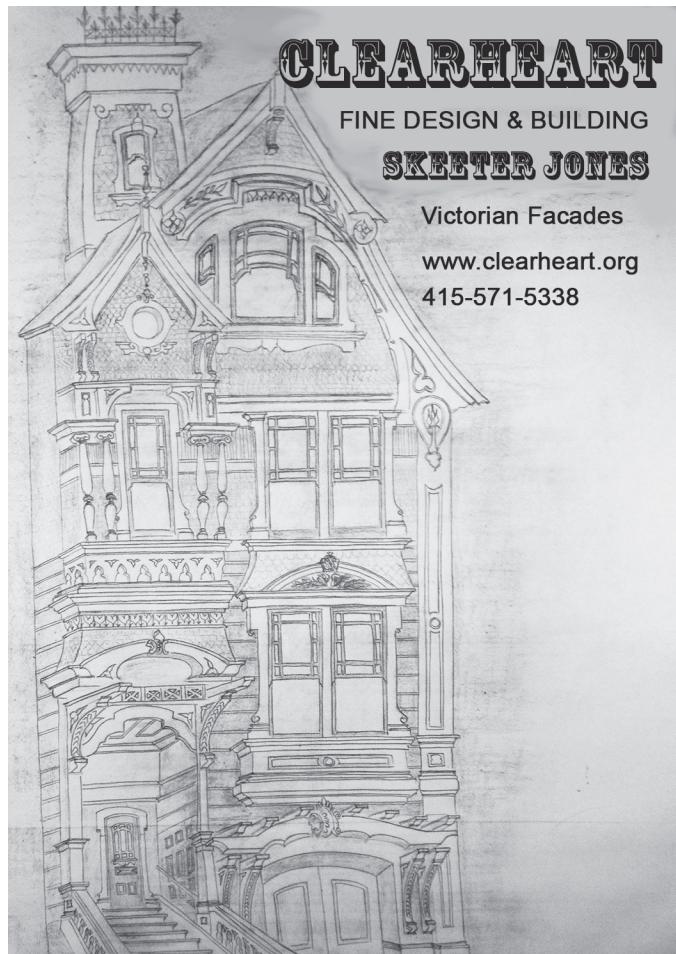
—Neighborhood history researched and written by Catherine Accardi

Sources:

Nimmo, H. Arlo. *Good and Bad Times in a San Francisco Neighborhood: A History of Potomac Street and Duboce Park*. San Francisco: October Properties, 2007

Bodi, Alexander S. *The Duboce Triangle of San Francisco: A Study of a Community*. Master's Thesis, San Francisco State University, 1983

San Francisco Department of City Planning Historic Preservation Commission, *Duboce Park Landmark District Case Report, San Francisco*: December 19, 2012



## Kit Haskell Gingerbread

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# 214 Steiner Street

## THE SAMUEL AND MARY WHITEHEAD HOUSE

THE WHITEHEAD HOUSE is an elaborate example of the Italianate style, designed by Curlett and Eisen, Architects. It seems to have every bit of fancy trim the builder could find room for. The five-sided bays on the front and side have little columns between the windows. The side bay was featured in the book *A Gift to the Street*, by Judith Lynch Waldhorn and Carol Olwell. Also on the front and side is a "French cap" (masking the "V" shaped roof) above the typical Italianate cornice. The two columns and six pilasters on the front and north side have Corinthian capitals made of cast iron.

Floor plans and exterior details suggest that 210, 212, 214, and possibly 216 Steiner were built on speculation at the same time by the same developer. The windows and bays at 212 and 214 are perfectly matched and aligned across Laussat Street. 210 was built as a single story house, but much later the basement was excavated and more living space was added there. 212 Steiner was two stories, but it was later jacked up so a third story could be added under the house. 216 is a mystery. It has been thoroughly "remuddled."

Real estate agents Easton and Eldridge had the water turned on in all four houses in mid-June 1881. Later that year they sold them, 210 and 212 for \$2,750 and the two-story 214 Steiner for \$2,800.

Wendell Easton sold 214 late in July 1881 to Mary J. Whitehead, who moved from the first block of Steiner with her children and her husband, Samuel B. Whitehead, an auctioneer. His company, SB Whitehead & Co. (livestock, general auctioneers and bookmakers) was located at 20 Leidesdorff. In addition to running a horse betting operation, Whitehead owned part interest in the Bay View and Emeryville race tracks.

His father, also named Samuel, was a cabinetmaker who lived with them. The senior Whitehead may be responsible for some of the embellishments to the house.

From outside you can see the fancy columned front portico and the stained-glass enclosure to the left of the entrance. From the inside you can see that the stained-glass enclosure is above a switch-back staircase which was added to the house to convert it from two flats to a single family home. Also unique are the Lincrusta-Walton wall coverings, faux-marble metal mantle with tiled apron, English Minton tiled kitchen (which matches the front porch landing), and the granite drain board and wooden cabinetry around the kitchen sink.

Samuel B. Whitehead died here in 1920 at the age of 78. In 1941, three of his children inherited the property, and it passed out of the family's ownership in 1955 when grandson Barry Whitehead sold it after converting it to three units, plus one unfinished unit.

The current owners, John and Carol Hull, have converted it back to a single family house, and have done extensive work undoing changes that were made when it was converted to multiple units. The back fence along Laussat was rebuilt and topped by a cut-out section designed and cut by John, who also did the balustrade on the new back stairs.

—House history updated and enhanced by Carol Hull, based on *The Victorian Alliance House Tour Program, October 1995*.



# 78 Carmelita Street

## THE JAMES DOCKERY RESIDENCE

CARMELITA STREET IS an enclave abutting Duboce Park, developed by the builder/developer Fernando Nelson in 1899 and 1900. Nelson bought the Marion Tract hospital lots in April of 1899, and immediately began grading. By July, water was hooked up at 78 Primrose Street, the first house he built on the block that summer. Primrose was the map name for the street, but in the City Directory, Carmelita was listed from 1898. The Board of Supervisors would correct the discrepancy officially to Carmelita Street at the end of 1901.

Fernando Nelson was a well-respected residential builder, and his style of development was to build a model of the kind of craftsmanship he could provide for prospective buyers, and often move his family into the home himself. Nelson would not live in 78 Carmelita, but duplicated his turreted home at 709 Castro (moved later by a new owner to the corner as 701 Castro Street today). Nelson would build both sides of Carmelita, and by the end of 1899, had 6 buildings constructed on the east side of Carmelita. The method of operation that Nelson employed was to offer design variables to the client, not build on speculation.

The original owner of 78 Carmelita was James Patrick Dockery and his wife Eleanor. James was a gregarious fellow, who had a knack for getting mentioned in the press, either in his two terms as the crusading Board of Health milk inspector or for his leadership roles in the Native Sons of the Golden West. Dockery's political connections must have eased his appointment as Chief Food and Milk Inspector in 1895. The press avidly followed his crusading early-morning inspections of milk deliveries within San Francisco. While Dockery seemed like the righteous protector of the infants and children of San Francisco, there also were accusations that the caped crusader was shaking down dairymen for bribe money. On June 28, 1899, in James D. Phelan's second term as the "reform" mayor, there was a shakeup of the Board of Health and Dockery lost his job. This seems significant in relationship to 78 Primrose Street. Dockery must have already contracted to purchase the property, because about 9 months later in the 1900 Census, James P., wife Eleanor and 23-year-old son Eugene were sharing this small house with 6 lodgers: two couples, and two single men. It seems strange why the James Dockery family seemed affluent enough to purchase the Fernando Nelson model home, and then would essentially be running a rooming house in that new home. James Dockery would have other jobs until 1910, when a new administration in City Hall appointed him as milk inspector again for two years. After his death in 1913, his widow sold the home in 1917.

The next couple who bought 78 Carmelita Street would occupy the building for 22 years, between themselves and an adult daughter who raised her daughter there. In 1939 a 68-year-old single, San Francisco native named Sarah B. Hanton, who had inherited a large amount of money earlier that year, would purchase the house. Her widowed brother Alfred would become the sole resident until he died, and then his sister took up residency in 1956 at the age 85. She would live in the house until 1973 when she died at age 101, prompting the false neighborhood rumor that elderly Sarah might have been Fernando Nelson's daughter. After Sarah's death, the property changed hands a couple of times until the current owners purchased it in 1977. They have now lived in this "model" home 39 years, the longest of any previous occupant, have raised their children, and made tasteful changes, always respecting the quality aspects of the building that Fernando Nelson used to showcase this block adjoining Duboce Park. Be certain to admire the colorful, award-winning fiber art wall hangings and sculptures in the artist's second floor studio.

—House history essay researched and written by John T. Freeman.



# 73 Carmelita Street

## THE ROBERT TOBIN HOUSE

THE HOME AT 73 Carmelita Street has a façade similar but not identical to most of the other buildings on the west side of the street. This marketing practice was very typical of the contractor, Fernando Nelson, who in his earlier career did all the design work for his projects. He worked with his buyers, presenting a basic style and then inviting them to alter the size and appearance of the building. Nelson had a reputation for having his clients choose their façade details out of mill-pattern planning books.

There are certain characteristics of a Nelson building, however, that can be seen on most of Carmelita Street and can also be found on buildings he constructed around the corner on Waller Street. The use of decorative brackets in the entry, often framing a pattern of turned balls, "teeth," or even circles he called "donuts," is one of the clues to a Nelson-built building. The sunburst design in the eaves is another of his trademark elements; while the sunburst does not appear on 73 Carmelita, there are numerous examples on this block. One design element that both 73 and 78 Carmelita share, and is found in other of his buildings on the block, is the unique turned wood balustrades with stretchers between, found on both original interior stairways.

The dating of 73 Carmelita is 1900, and the first owners were Robert and Mary Tobin. They moved in with their nine-year-old daughter and ten-year-old son. Robert was a skilled furniture finisher and foreman for one of the major manufacturers in the city. The Tobin family would live in their home for 38 years. After a brief residency by tenants, the property was sold to a couple named Holstein, who lived in the house fifteen years. When the husband died, his widow stayed on seven more years. The next owner, a widow named Mrs. Pinkie Washington, purchased the house in 1962, and after she died ten years later, the property would have multiple deed transfers between 1972 and 1980, a period when some remodeling and extending of the kitchen was done, but the original historic features were

preserved. Married physicians would next own the house for four years, and when they moved on in their careers, sold it to the current owners in June of 1984, enjoying the second longest residency since the original owners moved in 116 years ago.

The current owners undertook a tasteful remodel of the upper story and attic area to accommodate their family but preserved the integrity of the original craftsmanship. Both are accomplished fine arts professionals, as reflected by their exceptional artwork and collections displayed throughout the home.

*—House history essay researched and written by John T. Freeman.*



# 95 Scott Street

## THE FRANCIS O'NEILL HOUSE

**T**HIS PICTURESQUE FRONT gabled Queen Anne tower house was built in 1891 by Francis O'Neill, identified in the 1880 census as a plumber. He hired John Foster, a little known builder/architect, who erected it at a cost of \$7,000. The water was turned on February 1891.

Among the features of its decorative, asymmetrical façade are an attic-level gabled dormer, a second story balustraded balcony, and a first story sharply angled window. The gabled front porch is accessed by a long, steep rise of stairs. The original iron front fence is still there. There are 24 original stained glass windows.

By 1900, O'Neill's niece-in-law, Carrie O'Neill, is listed not only as the owner of 51 Scott Street, but also of the Francis O'Neill property, which was originally two units, numbered 35-37 Scott Street. In 1910, Carrie sold the flats, by then numbered 95-97, to the Danish-American family of Fritz J.W. Andersen, a partner in the Pacific Structural Iron Works. In the 1920s an elevator was installed to run directly from the basement to the first floor of 95 Scott.

In 1937 Charles John, a warehouseman for Schlage Lock Company, and his wife, Helen, purchased the house from Cecilia Andersen. Schlage locks are found throughout the structure. During WW II, when workers flooded into shipyards and a housing crisis ensued, the Johns converted the house, throwing up thin plywood partitions and lowering the 12-foot ceilings so the new small rooms would not feel like rectangles set on end. The property was noted then as a seven-unit apartment house with four housekeeping rooms. The Johns themselves lived in the basement, in a unit later legalized (after dropping the floor to meet minimum ceiling requirements) and "condo-ized" as 99 Scott Street.

In 1968 Ms. John filed papers to reconvert the house to two units. In 1971 she sold it to James Heig, an English teacher, Kenner Foote, a banker, and two other partners. James Heig and his partners poked a broom through the lowered ceilings and saw that the original 12-foot ceilings were intact, as were the 24 stained glass windows, the molding, and the rosettes. They restored the units back to their Victorian elegance by hand in the early 1970s.

James Heig lived in the house until he died in 2013. His two children grew up there, and his ex-wife, Adair Lara, lives there today with her husband Bill LeBlond, along with Kenner Foote, one of the original partners. James' three grandchildren are often there as well.

The building is now legally four condos: 95 Scott being one. The flat below, 97 Scott, is actually two legal condos occupied as one big flat; the back half of the structure is 701 Waller Street.

Jim Heig co-authored and published the acclaimed book, *San Francisco: Building the Dream City* (ScottWall Associates, \$60.00). The book will be available for purchase at 95 Scott Street on the day of the tour and by order from Adair Lara (adair.lara@gmail.com).

—House history essay written by Adair Lara, based on research by Joseph B. Pecora.



# 599 Duboce Avenue

## THE FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH

THE FIRST CHRISTIAN Church of San Francisco appears in a City Directory as early as 1856. By May of 1887 the flourishing congregation moved from small quarters into a new building in the then bustling South of Market area. Like many victims on that fateful April 1906 day, the church was destroyed.

In June 1906, church leaders simultaneously secured temporary quarters for regular services at 2121 Market Street and land at 599 Duboce Avenue for a building of their own.

Only recently constructed in 1906, 2121 Market Street was auspiciously named the New Era Hall. Today, it is the home to Crossroads clothing store and the Academy of Ballet.

Like so many land speculators of the day, Andrew Jamieson purchased the vacant land at Duboce Avenue and Noe Streets only a year before settling profitable terms with First Christian Church. After renting the land for three years, a deed of sale transferred the property from Jamieson to the church under an eight-month, \$7,000 mortgage.

The architecture firm of Ross and Burgren designed the Mission Revival building you see today. General contractor Fred Miller charged \$40,000 for construction. Work started in November of 1906 and the building was dedicated January 26, 1908.

On January 27, 1908, the *San Francisco Chronicle* ran an article describing the new building as "being attractive in design and appearance, [containing] every convenience for the requirements of the parishioners." The article continues with, "the main body will accommodate 700 or 800 people, and is severely simple in its finish."

While standing outside on the Noe Street side, look up and notice the undulating roofline to the right of the corner tower. This camel back hump is indicative of the Mission Revival style. It is repeated, though also expanded across the full width of the building along the rear. This detail is visible from Duboce Park just to the north of the church. Simple, blunt-end eave-brackets encircle the tower, hold up the two shed roofs on the west façade, and repeat along the north side of the church. A large compass-

motif window-surround is featured on the front with a smaller quatrefoil surround and a hybrid version providing a small measure of symmetry to an otherwise eclectic face. On the north side of the tower, another circular window appears, though this version is medium-sized in comparison to the two front facing circular windows, and the compass surround is rotated 45 degrees. The blade sign in the shape of a Christian cross was likely added between the 1930s and the 1950s.

This simple exterior belies the exuberant Arts and Crafts interior. Enter through the Noe Street doors and proceed up the stairs to the Sanctuary. This lovely space is presented in much of its original condition. Capitalizing on the austerity of the Arts and Crafts movement, and on a budget, Ross and Burgren utilized simple materials to create a unifying effect. The exposed bracket-and-truss structure, evocative of an imagined Noah's Ark, along with the use of redwood throughout the room, is internal to the design. Further, simple tongue-and-groove "infill" ceiling paneling provides an impact with modest materials. Soft, even ethereal light is achieved by original enormous arching art glass windows along either side of the room. All match in color and design, except for variations of imagery at the center of each window.

A note from The First Christian Church: We welcome you during your Duboce Park Neighborhood Tour. Our congregation extends this invitation to join us for our 9:30 AM Sunday Worship Service, when the Sacrament of Communion is offered to all believers. We look forward to seeing you. Our website is [firstchristianchurchsfca.com](http://firstchristianchurchsfca.com). At this time, the Thursday Bible Study is not available.

—Building history essay researched and written by Gary Goss. Paul Duchscherer contributed interior notes. Edited by Jason Allen-Rouman.



# 73 Henry Street

## THE CHARLES BRANDENBURG HOUSE

GERMAN-BORN CHARLES BRANDENBURG worked as a master mariner and as a foreman on the docks from the time he arrived in San Francisco in the 1870s. He had lived with his young family close to the waterfront until 1893, the year when carpenter John A. McConnell built 73 (then 71) Henry Street on the lot the Brandenburgs bought the previous year. Soon, they were spending time in both Vacaville (Charles died there in 1897) and San Francisco. Perhaps, then, it was easy for them to sell their Henry Street home to one of the families displaced by the 1906 earthquake and fire.

The new owners were the Browns, who had lived in the same South of Market residence since the 1860s, when Margaret and Michael Brown (a laborer) emigrated to the U.S. from Ireland after the Great Potato Famine. Michael died in the 1880s; several of their thirteen children would also die young. Since they were burnt out on April 18, it must have been a welcome relief to settle into 73 Henry eight months later. Son John Brown likely provided much of the family's financial support through his work as a butcher and meat inspector. Daughter Anne helped with her work as a seamstress.

Sometimes they took in lodgers to help out. John's fire insurance claims from 1906 were among the many that were never settled by the German insurer.

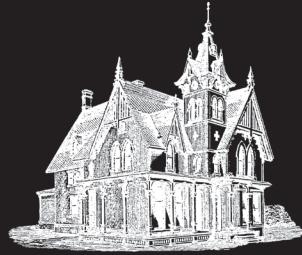
The Browns, and their descendants the McKennas and Stones, would own and live here for ninety years—1906 to 1995. From Margaret Brown, the matriarch, 73 Henry passed to the youngest son, Tom, in 1916. (He had been a butcher like his older brother, but in 1917 he gave his occupation as assistant manager of the Grand Theatre on Mission street.) From Tom, the house passed to his sister Anne, and from her to her sister's children,

William McKenna and his sister Claire Stone; Claire gave her share to William. William McKenna would live here from 1936 to 1984. It then passed to his nephew William Stone, who sold in 1995, bringing the Brown-McKenna-Stone family ownership to a close. Since 1995, title has shifted frequently, including to the proprietors of "All Star Stilts & Comedy."

The current owners plan to stay and bring up their family in this delightful neighborhood. They have worked hard to reinvigorate, and "re-Victorianize" their now gorgeous home. From the outside, this apparently modest cottage combines features of Stick and Queen Anne styles: the square bay window and porch and semi-mansard roof are pulled together with the pediment gable. Step inside and you find a spacious two-story home, with 14-foot ceilings in the public rooms on the entry level over a full floor of bedrooms downstairs at the garden level. Not only have the current owners brought back period details that previous owners had stripped away (moldings, cornices, door frames, picture rails), they are ever conscious about creating a green and eminently livable family house—with energy efficiency upgrades, a rooftop solar array, and organic gardens front and back.

—House history essay researched and written by Eileen Keremitsis.





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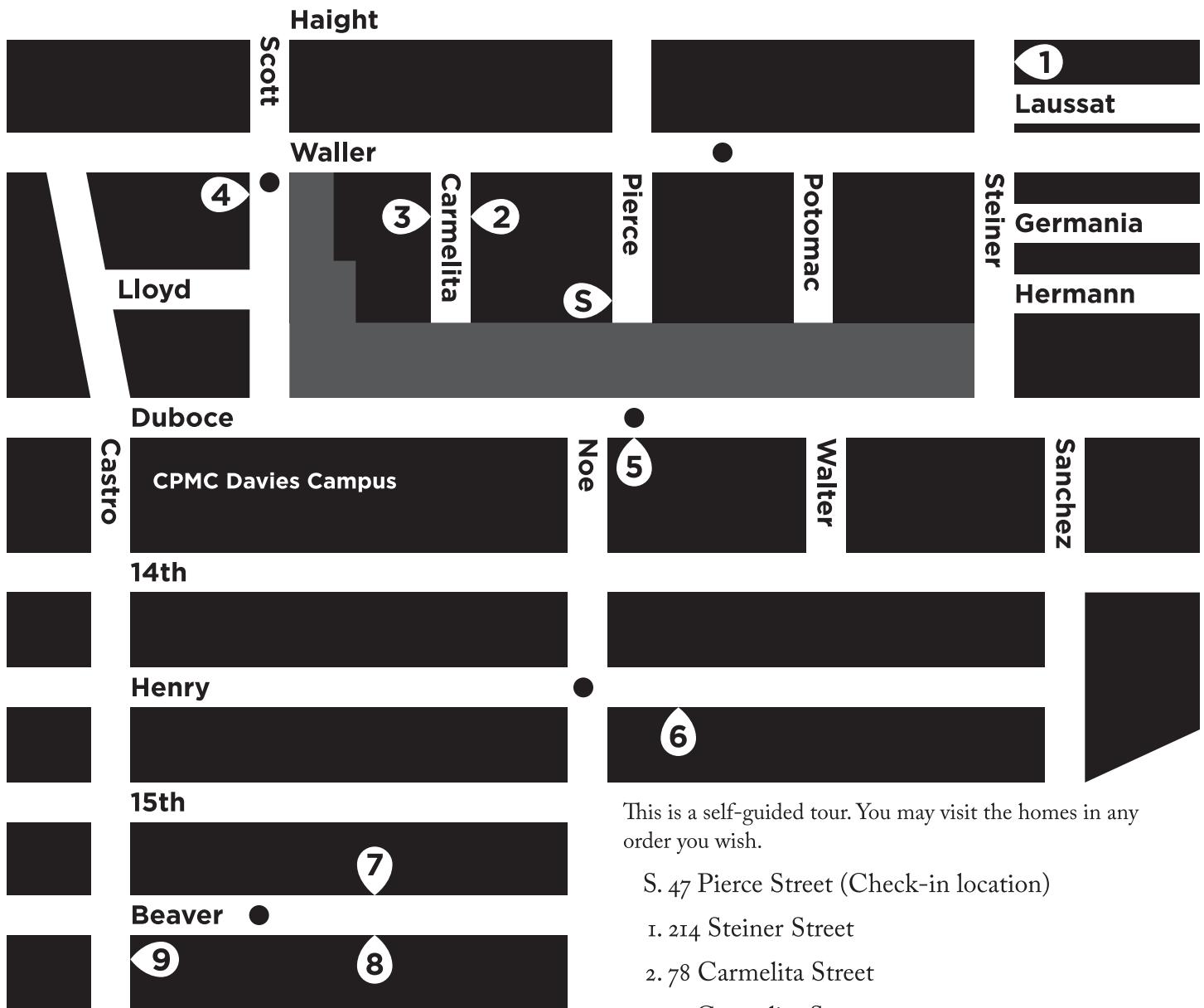
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**Z**  
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# DUBOCE PARK TOUR MAP



● Indicates a cable car bus stop for tour patrons.

Please note that some houses will require provided shoe coverings.

**No photography** is allowed while inside the homes.

Please no pets, but registered service animals are welcome.

Light refreshments will be served from 1:00 to 4:30 pm at 599 Duboce Ave.

Restrooms will be available during tour hours at:

- 599 Duboce Ave (Fellowship Hall)
- CPMC Davies Campus (Castro and Duboce)

This is a self-guided tour. You may visit the homes in any order you wish.

- 1. 47 Pierce Street (Check-in location)
- 2. 214 Steiner Street
- 3. 78 Carmelita Street
- 3. 73 Carmelita Street
- 4. 95 Scott Street
- 5. 599 Duboce Ave
- 6. 73 Henry Street
- 7. 22 Beaver Street
- 8. 23 Beaver Street (Check-in location)
- 9. 263 Castro Street

# 22 Beaver Street

## THE JACOB BENEDICT HOUSE

**T**HIS ITALIANATE RESIDENCE with two floors and a finished attic was built around 1870 and was the first house on Beaver Street. The street, named for George W. Beaver, an early landowner in the area, was not yet paved, and the carriage house to the northwest of the home faced Castro Street. The earliest known occupant of the house was Jacob Benedict, a refiner with the San Francisco Assaying and Refining Works. He is first listed in the San Francisco Directory in April 1871 as living on Castro Street south of 15th Street. Until 1876 he was still listed on Castro Street, which may have meant the access to the property was down Beaver Street from Castro Street and not up Beaver Street from Noe Street.

The original owner of the entire block of Castro, Beaver, 15th, and Noe Streets was William Hollis of The Real Estate Associates, who purchased this property in May 1867 for \$8,370. After this purchase, there is no record of a deed to Benedict, so it is not clear who originally owned or built the house. After the Spring Valley Water Company constructed a water main down Beaver Street, Benedict subscribed for water on June 20, 1882, but this does not prove that he was the property owner. Due to many erasures, the original water service application does not reveal the original building use, but the earliest description appears to have been "2 family."

The 1880 United States census does indeed show two families living in the house, Jacob Benedict, born in Nova Scotia, age

49, his wife Ellen Benedict, also born in Nova Scotia, age 45, and a second family, Roland S. Williams, born in England, age 35, his wife Mary Williams, also born in England, age 33, and their two sons. The occupation given for both Benedict and Williams is carpenter.

The 1894 Block Book, based on assessor's records, provides the earliest concrete information about ownership, showing George T. Davis as owner, first listed here in the 1889 City Directory. Davis was variously listed as a wool grader, wool sorter, wool dealer, and a wool buyer. In May 1898 his estate deeded the house to Mary F. Fee for \$4,000. The 1900 Federal census lists Mary Fee living here with her son, a daughter, a son-in-law, and a granddaughter, while a second family is also listed, a couple and their two daughters.

Early photos show there was a side entrance porch facing Noe Street, which has been removed. There is a side Italianate bay window on the east, which unfortunately faces a later building. The front tower was added sometime after the 1906 earthquake.

The property over the years became a rooming house, and by 1966 when the current owner purchased the house, there were 22 hippie residents, each paying \$10.00 per month rent! The residence has been restored since then and today presents a most fashionable appearance.

*—House history essay researched and written by Gary Goss for the 2002 Duboce Triangle Historic Neighborhood House Tour.*

## 22 BEAVER STREET: A MEMOIR BY IMOGENE "TEX" GIELING, JULY 2016

The house at 22 Beaver Street was built in 1870 and is 146 years old. As of June 1, 2016 I will have lived here 50 years since its purchase in 1966. This neighborhood west of Noe was so obscure that we actually never knew it existed. Eureka Valley was originally a Scandinavian neighborhood. Within a few blocks were a Swedish Hall with a Rathskeller, a Norwegian restaurant called the Norse Cove, a Norwegian meat market, a Danish delicatessen and a Finnish bath House, Finilias. At the north corner of Noe and Market there were two used car lots, called Klunker King #1 and Klunker King #2. There was so little activity on these lots that grass grew out of the used cars' windshields. Beaver Street was so remote that people would abandon their old cars here.

This was the oldest house on the street and in the worst condition when we first saw it in 1966. The previous owners purchased it purely as an investment with intentions to acquire #20 Beaver Street next door for motel or nursing home use. Denied the #20 purchase, the owners put #22 on the market without one offer over three years. During that time, neighbors had suspended any improvements to their properties, waiting for a decision on this one home.

*(Continued on Page 18)*



# 23 Beaver Street

## THE SYLVESTER DOAN HOUSE

**T**HIS 1892 STICK-EASTLAKE house is comprised of one story and a basement. Typical for houses of this period, the siding is channel rustic, windows have double-hung sashes, and the front door is paneled, with upper-level glazing. A transom window is above the door, and a balustraded staircase with turned newel posts leads to the recessed entrance.

A French cap, or miniature Mansard roof, stretches across the top of the house and wraps around the projecting bay window. At the top of the bay window, a pediment filled with incised ornament rises into the French cap.

The vertical “sticks” of the Stick-Eastlake style are applied to the corners of the house and the bay window and flank the entrance opening. They are decorated with raised strips of molded wood and narrow panels. Curvilinear brackets with pendant knobs support the French cap and a shelf molding over the entrance. Panels can be found in the frieze beneath the French cap and at the top and base of the bay window. Those in the bay window are filled with sunbursts and incised ornament.

The moldings are finely carved, with crisp edges, as was always the case in 19th century San Francisco houses. They create a rich texture that catches the eye and draws the viewer closer.

Contractor William W. Rednall was born in Massachusetts in 1859 and came to San Francisco in 1880. For five years he worked as a mill hand and joiner at Jason Springer and Company, a major supplier of lumber, doors, sash, moldings, brackets, and blinds, at the southeast corner of Spear and Mission streets. He used this job a springboard to become, in 1886, a contractor and builder, an occupation he continued for forty-three years. Sometimes he built houses to order for clients, but more often he built on his own account, taking on the roles of owner, designer, builder, and seller. He became more ambitious over time, building flats and apartment buildings, principally in Cow Hollow during the 1910s–1920s. He seems to have retired in 1929; he died in 1946.

The first owner, Sylvester Doan, was born in New York in 1861 and came to San Francisco about 1880. He lived South of Market with relatives and then in North Beach with his bride Minnie, until he and Minnie moved here. The purchase price of 22 Beaver was \$1,977.00. During 1883–1898 he worked for the *San Francisco Examiner* as a compositor, setting type by hand. After the *Examiner* acquired linotype machines, Doan continued working as a compositor and printer, probably for small periodicals that could not afford costly linotypes. Finally, in 1907 or 1908, Doan himself became a linotype operator. He worked as such until his death in 1918.

Joseph Allegaert owned this house during 1923–1960. He lived here through 1936; intermittently over the next nine years; and continuously again during 1945–1959. He had a succession of blue collar jobs: fruit peddler, salesman, and house painter. When he returned to living at 23 Beaver Street in 1945 he seems to have been unemployed for a decade and then worked as a teamster for Hamm’s Brewery.

This house sold many times during the last forty years of the 20th century. During 1963–1968 the owner and resident was Hollis B. Gray, a business manager for UCSF. The resident during 1968–1974 was Robert G. Manette, a passenger representative for the San Francisco branch of the Union Steamship Company of New Zealand. Manette donated a collection of steamship company photographs and memorabilia to the San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park. Kenneth Lemeron, owner from 1974–1976, also owned the Shingle Shack Antiques store at 1772 Haight Street. Geologist William Hempkins resided here during 1976–1999. From then until 2009, it was occupied by Eckhard Evers. The current owner has resided at 23 Beaver since 2009 and has carefully preserved much of the original interior while making tasteful upgrades and installing an inviting hardscape garden.

—House history researched and written by William Kostura.



(Continued from Page 16) —

We moved in on June 1, 1966 and began putting up the fence that had been destroyed by a runaway truck. One by one, neighbors came to express thanks with gifts. Some of their plants still grace the yard. Next we cleaned the property. The house had been condemned because garbage had not been picked up and vermin had overtaken the property. Due to neighbor complaints, an Order of Condemnation had been issued. When we took possession there were 22 hippie residents, each occupying a separate padlocked room for \$10 monthly rent. Every renter had either a dog or a baby or both. We disposed of four truckloads of trash and wet garbage. The house was in such poor condition that we moved into the attic and lived there for two years while we renovated.

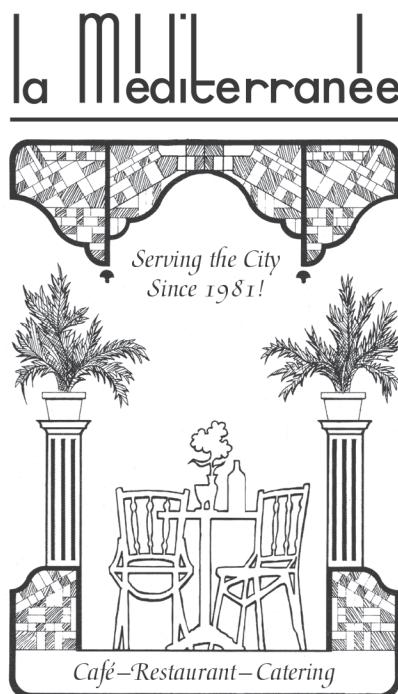
In 1976 the Junior League of San Francisco determined that the structure was an example of an early house worthy of saving, primarily because of the tower, and declared that it was in the upper 2% of San Francisco houses that needed to be saved. The city building inspector wanted it razed; in his opinion it was “perpetuating a mediocrity.” It took us ten years to correct the plumbing, electrical and structural code violations.

However, after the house violations had been corrected, the barn was still in violation. Prohibited from tearing it down, we added walls, a roof, windows and a foundation, all from the inside. After excavation and pouring concrete of the foundation, the next day we discovered that a 5 gallon/minute leak had been unleashed from under the barn. City water inspectors determined it was ground spring water, so we may well have tapped into the lost Beaver Creek. Within two days the flowing water stopped. After the variances were obtained from the neighbors, the Carriage House, as the barn was now called, was completed as a rental in 1976.

Room by room, feature by feature over fifty years with professional services of Artistic License—a collective of preservation artisans—22 Beaver Street was lovingly restored. I am very pleased to again open my home for your enjoyment as well as to benefit The Victorian Alliance Grant Program.

—*Essay excerpted from the 22 Beaver Street Memoir by Tex Gieling, edited by Anita Denz.*

Biographical notes: Imogene “Tex” Gieling—who celebrated her 93rd birthday this year—is an accomplished artist who founded the University of California, Berkeley, and San Francisco State University Metals Departments. She is a charter member of the Metal Arts Guild and received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Society of North American Goldsmiths. Her oral history has been recorded for the Smithsonian Museum Archives of American Art. [www.aaa.si.edu/collections/interviews/oral-history/interview-imogene-tex-gieling-15637](http://www.aaa.si.edu/collections/interviews/oral-history/interview-imogene-tex-gieling-15637)



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# 263 Castro Street

## THE WILLIAM COLES HOUSE

**B**EFORE BEING THROWN off the force for blackmailing suspected criminals, 263 Castro's first owner, SFPD Sergeant William Coles, had amassed enough cash to have this upscale Queen Anne built for himself and his family in 1889. William was the first of a series of interesting characters to own and live here. In fact, the titled owner from the start was Ida Coles, William's daughter (probably so named to protect William's assets). By all accounts, Ida was a strong, independent woman: a primary school teacher and later principal, who remained single until shortly after her father died. It's fun to speculate that William wouldn't have approved of Ida's husband, the salesman Edwin Mills, who moved in with her at 263 Castro. Ida registered to vote as soon as it was legal for women to do so, and registered for a different party from her husband. The home remained in the Coles family for half a century.

Another policeman and his family purchased the home from Ida's estate in 1939—Francis and Veronica Lynch. In a few years, Francis would die in a car accident. When Veronica remarried, she sold 263 Castro to lawyer Robert Danforth and his beautiful and vivacious wife, June. (One long-time neighbor recalls taking dance classes from June at their home when he was a boy.) The newspapers loved the drama when June and Robert fought out their marital difficulties in court—she accused him of ignoring her, he accused her of affairs. The only time a renter lived here was a short period following the Danforth divorce. The next owner-resident was the most famous and the most colorful. Journalist and muckraker, the late Warren Hinckle, lived here with his family from 1966 to 1982.

Not surprisingly, the price of 263 Castro has jumped over the years—from \$3,750 in 1939, to \$11,500 in 1959. When it went on the market in 1982, the asking price was a quarter of a million dollars, and of course, the value has only risen since then.

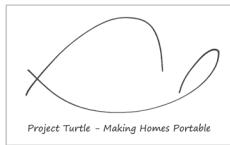
While market price doesn't always reflect the value, it is clear that the owners have always valued the home, treating it with care and respect, leaving even the smallest details intact. The original water tap recorded a two-story structure, with two

wash trays, two wash basins, one bath, one water closet and fifty square yards of irrigation. (The second wash basin would have given Ida Coles a modicum of privacy from her parents.) The current owners—who admit they pale in comparison to their sometimes notorious forebears—have installed a second bathroom with attention to detail so meticulous that it looks like it was part of the original layout of the house.

Set on an east-west axis, luxurious bay windows in front and back flood the house with light from morning till evening. Leaded glass windows add a sparkle of color. An original skylight reaches through from the upstairs hallway through the multi-angled roofline to light the central staircase. The hallways, ceilings, fireplaces, wood paneling—all are original, and all still beautiful.

—House history essay researched and written by Eileen Keremitsis.





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Forged in reaction to the wide-scale, government imposed demolition of whole neighborhoods built before 1910, the Victorian Alliance of San Francisco remains The City's oldest all-volunteer, not-for-profit organization committed to the restoration and preservation of historically significant structures.

Since our founding in 1973 by concerned citizens, we have continuously met as a membership, shared our hands-on restoration knowledge, lobbied, educated, held fund-raisers, toured prominent places, and have awarded grants to a wide variety of preservation and restoration projects. We actively support the preservation efforts of individual citizens as well as our elected and appointed representatives.

Membership is open to all. Whether you are a homeowner or renter, the Victorian Alliance welcomes you. We invite your participation at whatever level your interests and time permit. Come to a meeting and join us. Please call us at 415-824-2666 or email us at [contact@victorianalliance.org](mailto:contact@victorianalliance.org) for the location of our next meeting. Membership dues will increase January 2017. Join now and enjoy 2016 rates through December 2017.

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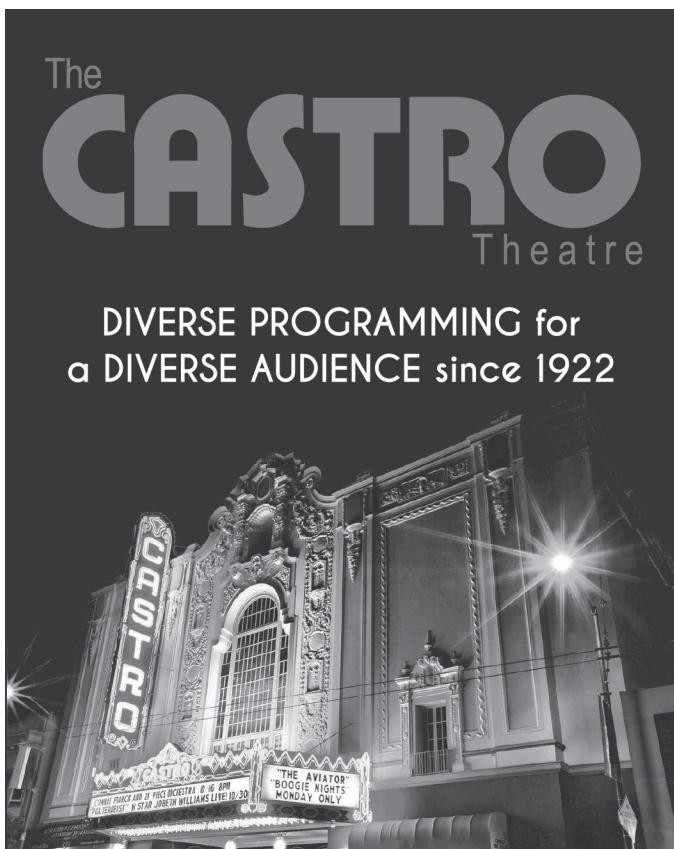
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The Victorian Alliance would like to express its gratitude to our homeowners and board members of the First Christian Church. Their generosity and community spirit have made this tour possible.

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**Catering:** Kelser Colino, 1542 Catering

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We extend thanks to all others who may have volunteered after the publication of this program. We are most grateful for your service.

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Our deep thanks go to.....

- Gary Goss for his exceptional gift of 1906 Swedish American Hall blueprints rendered by architect August Nordin. The documents were gratefully accepted by Enrique Landa, Partner of Mac5, a real estate firm specializing in the redevelopment and repositioning of culturally significant and historic buildings. In 2015, after undergoing significant restoration and ADA upgrades, Swedish American Hall (San Francisco Landmark 267) opened to the public as a premier dining, event and entertainment destination. The historically significant August Nordin blueprints will be conserved and displayed in the Hall, where Victorian Alliance homeowners, patrons and volunteers will enjoy a post-tour Appreciation Party.
- Julia Strzesieski, Marketing and Community Partner Coordinator, Cole Hardware, for arranging a generous donation of wine for our Appreciation Party
- Alliance member Andrew Akens who graciously underwrote promotional hand-out materials
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